GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1431
ANSWERED ON:25.07.2017
Desertification
Lekhi Smt. Meenakashi

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the desert area in the country has increased due to the repeated failure of monsoon and indiscriminate deforestation;
(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;
(c) whether the views of experts in this regard have been taken into consideration; and
(d) if so, the action taken in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(DR. HARSH VARDHAN)

(a) & (b)As per the information provided by Central Arid Zone Research Institute, Jodhpur, the country's desert area (Great Indian Desert) lies exclusively in western part of Rajasthan with a total area of about 20.8 m ha. The delineated boundary of the desert area in this region has not changed. There is a net increase of 3775 square kilometres in the forest cover of the country in 2015 compared to 2013 as per State of Forest Report of India of respective years.

(c) & (d) In line with Sustainable Development Goal 15.3, the Government is targeting Land Degradation Neutrality by 2030, involving all stakeholders including experts.The Government is continuing its efforts at efficient utilization and conservation of land and water resources through a number of programmes on watershed management, rainwater conservation, afforestation under schemes like Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojna (PMKSY) etc. Such programmes have been formulated after due consultation with relevant stakeholders and experts including those from scientific organisations/institutes under Government of India.

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